

Application No. 09/891,997
Response dated February 24, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 8, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-43 were pending in the application, the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 6-26 and 30-43 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 4 and 5 are objected to because of informalities.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,920,409 to Yamagishi (“Yamagishi”).

Claims 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamagishi as applied to claims 1-3 and 5 above in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,414,669 B1 to Masazumi (“Masazumi”).

A Preliminary Amendment was mailed on August 13, 2001 (filed by the PTO on August 16, 2001). Acknowledgment by the Examiner is respectfully requested.

A Request for Approval of Proposed Drawing Changes was mailed on August 13, 2001 (filed by the PTO on August 16, 2001). Consideration and approval by the Examiner is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 4 and 5 are objected to because there is allegedly insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation of “the first pitch being 1/n of the second pitch, where n is a natural number not less than 2.” Antecedent basis for this limitation is in both the specification and the figures of the current application. Paragraph [0038], on page 16 of the specification, specifically notes a horizontal direction to vertical direction ratio of 1:2, i.e., n = 2. Paragraphs [0066] and [0068] on page 24 of the specification specifically note 1:2 and 1:3 fields respectively, i.e., n = 2 and 3. The displays corresponding to paragraphs [0066] and [0068] are illustrated in FIGs. 10 and 12, which clearly show 1/2 and 1/3 pitch

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ratios. Thus, both the specification and the figures provide antecedent basis for the limitations found in claims 4 and 5. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 4 and 5 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Rejection

The rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamagishi, is respectfully traversed based on the following.

As shown in FIG. 2 of the present application, the signal electrodes C1-Cn have a second pitch that is wider than the first pitch of the scanning electrodes R1-Rm. Thus, FIG. 2 illustrates the embodiment claimed in claim 1.

In contrast, Yamagishi does not disclose a signal electrode pitch that is wider than a scanning electrode pitch. As noted in column 1, lines 19-32, the scanning electrodes are horizontal and denoted as C1-C3, while the signal electrodes are vertical and denoted Y1-Y7. Yamagishi thus discloses the use of scanning electrodes C1-C3 that have a wider pitch than the signal electrodes Y1-Y7. Because Yamagishi discloses using a scanning electrode pitch that is wider than a signal electrode pitch, Yamagishi cannot anticipate claim 1, which requires the exact opposite. Claims 2-5 depend from unanticipated claim 1, and are unanticipated for at least the same reason.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamagishi, be reconsidered and withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

The rejection of claims 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Yamagishi as applied to claims 1-5 above in view of Masazumi, is respectfully traversed based on the following.

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As discussed above, Yamagishi does not anticipate claim 1 because it does not disclose each limitation of claim 1. The combination of Yamagishi and Masazumi similarly fails to disclose or suggest each limitation of claim 1. Masazumi discloses only a single scanning/signal electrode configuration, illustrated in FIG. 4. FIG. 4 shows the pitch of the scanning electrodes to be equal to the pitch of the signal electrodes. As the scanning electrode pitch is equal to the signal electrode pitch, Masazumi fails to disclose or suggest at least one limitation of claim 1. Therefore, because the combination of Yamagishi and Masazumi fails to disclose or suggest each limitation of claim 1, the combination of Yamagishi and Masazumi cannot render obvious claim 1. Claims 27-29 depend from nonobvious claim 1 and are therefore nonobvious for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamagishi as applied to claims 1-5 above in view of Masazumi, be reconsidered and withdrawn.

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CONCLUSION

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Any fee required by this document other than the issue fee, and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and there is no separate Petition for Extension of Time filed herewith, this document is to be construed as also constituting a Petition for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for a period of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed.

Any other fee required for such Petition for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, other than the issue fee, and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Mark A. Dodd
Registration No. 45,729
Attorney for Applicants

MAD/jkk
SIDLEY AUSTIN BROWN & WOOD LLP
717 N. Harwood, Suite 3400
Dallas, Texas 75201
Direct: (214) 981-3481
Main: (214) 981-3300
Facsimile: (214) 981-3400
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